THE WORKERS'

DREADNOUGHT

Socialism, Internationalism, Votes for All.

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A CHRISTMAS IN EXILE

From a Prisoner in Knockaloe Internment Camp, Isle of Man.

On Bank Holiday about a thousand people visited the Alexandra Palace Internment Camp. Toiling up the hill in the bitter wind, their eyes wandered over the wide country stretched out beneath them, beautiful in its far undulations, in spite of the grey frost and leaden sky.

"Not a bad place to have to stay in," a visitor said to one of the trusted prisoners going up from the gate with some message.

"We who have come from the Isle of Man find this much better," the prisoner answered.

"But the country is lovely there," said the visitor.

"One does not see much of the country, and the accommodation is bad; one's friends cannot afford to come," said the prisoner.

On the top of the hill, behind the second barrier, crowds of men and women seethed in and out of the entrance to the main exhibition building, the "palace" of the old days, and across to the new temporary structures which have been erected to the right of it.

Passing in with the throng, one found oneself in a hall of strange Chinese pagodas and glass cases containing toys and trinkets; carved, painted, stained and inlaid wood; rings, lions, goats, dogs, and other little animals made out of silver paper; toy trains and aeroplanes, dolls, cupboards and trays, drawings, etchings and paintings,—the work of the interned men.

In the moving throng that circulated perpetually, few paused to glance at these exhibits; the majority were engrossed with their friends. Arms were entwined; glances eagerly exchanged. A well-known musician sold toys and trifles at the stall. Rocker, the editor of "Freedom," was the centre of a group of Russian revolutionaries. A frail little old Englishman clung to the arm of a tall young Austrian, his adopted son, described by a fellow-prisoner as: "A very religious boy and quite harmless." Many of the sons who had come to visit interned fathers were wearing British khaki.

The way into what was once the next exhibition pavilion was barred and shrouded, but those who peered through the holes in the covering discovered the interior to be the sleeping quarters of some of the interned men. Row on row of plank beds filled the pavilion, with only a narrow passage-way between. A plank bed, a miserable, impromptu-looking mattress, which scarce covers it, and four dull-brown blankets—such is the bedroom equipment of each inmate—no sheets, and the blankets are never washed. The majority of the inmates had hung some of their blankets around their beds to make a tent-like screen. Such attempts at securing privacy have only been allowed of late, and the blankets must be taken down at inspection each day. Some of the crowded wards are used also as mess-rooms, though some pavilions have a separate mess-room.

Sitting dejectedly upon their beds were the poor fellows who had no visitors to-day, and who had probably had no visitors during their long internment, for the friends of any who had friends would make an effort to come to-day. Their faces looked dull and sad, almost earthen in colour, like the old brown blankets. Sometimes one of them rose and looked through the rents in the door-covering at the moving throng of other people's visitors outside.

In the temporary buildings most of the family parties gathered. There were benches and tables where friends could buy tea and take it together. The interned men had hung the place with festoons of coloured paper. They had prepared a Punch and Judy show for the children, and one of them, dressed as Father Christmas, distributed the toys which the captive fathers had made.

Many and many a family sat, each at its little table, father and mother and children, cherishing every moment of their brief Christmas together—which could last, at most, but two and a quarter hours from barrier to barrier. A father sat with his darlings—one big girl nestled her head against his shoulder, the other lovingly stroked his hair. His little girl stood between his knees, and he carefully trimmed her nails. A bright little boy of four patiently waited his turn.

But the bell rang all too soon. Children screamed and protested at being torn from their fathers; men and women bowed their heads. A husband and wife clung to each other: "Oh, yes, I can manage, dearest; I can manage it all myself," said the woman with trembling voice.

Outside it was snowing. The crying children clung to their mothers. The 'buses and trams were full. The women stood clutching a strap, or sat, with their own or other people's babies upon their knees, and leaning against them. And in their heartbreak they told their stories to each other: "They took my husband when this child was two days old, and I had another child dangerously ill in hospital at the time. He pleaded with them to let him stay till I was up, but they would not——"

So 1917 drew to a close; what will 1918 bring?

K.H.

Of Special Interest This Week

The People's Way with the Food

The Only Way to Peace

A Poem, written in Lewes Gaol by Thomas Ashe

A Messroom at Alexandra Palace Internment Camp. (From an etching by a Prisoner.)

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS

They begin these things earlier in Germany! For, even if, during October and November, we honourably turn away our eyes from the knittings and stitchings and crewel work to parterres which burgeon unnaturally with the falling year. On December 6th, we are made aware that the fun has begun in frank good earnest. It is St. Nicholas' Day—St. Nicholas of kindly heart, who in times of long ago is held to have miraculously restored to life three little people barbarously done to death by a butcher who lacked of meat to fill his empty sausage skins—St. Nicholas, too, who, we are told, secretly provided dowries for the three portionless daughters of a humble artisan.

He is really an old friend of ours and of all the children who have ever hung up their stockings on Christmas Eve or sent a letter to Santa Claus speeding up the chimney, only in Germany these missives are delivered under a somewhat different name, and as folk there are possibly rather more categorical and ready to welcome any excuse for a festival, his celebration has remained unmerged with that of Christmas Day.

A kindly man, this St. Nicholas, but nevertheless with an eye to good behaviour. Every child has a birch for his portion, the only difference being that, while for the virtuous it is decked with sweetmeats and goodies of all kinds, for the wicked it lies bare—a solemn and unpalatable warning!

As the month advances, strange things happen in every German town. Out of the cobbles of the marketplace, forests of fir trees sprout overnight. Tall trees, short trees, trees for small families or for big ones; they have come mysteriously creaking over the roofs in huge "ladder waggons" and now they stand patiently awaiting their new homes, scenting the city air with the strong resinous perfume of their needles.

Down the neighbouring streets a little calico town arises; booth upon booth laden with all manner of wares, and glowing with many lights through the early dusk of the season. Far beyond the pots and pans of everyday life, interest centres round those stalls which sell the glittering tinsels and sparkling glass ornaments, the gingerbread ladies and gentlemen and riotous beasts, the sweets and fruits which are the crowning glory of the Christmas tree.

Swiftly the great festival approaches. Enterprising souls sit up into the small hours to deck the tree, which, whate of any size, presents a formidable task. Every one endeavours to invent some special and distinctive scheme; hunts are made through all the booths and shops on the track of unusual and up-to-date decorations. The most blasé bachelor or jaded paterfamilias demonstrates vivid interest in flimsy reproductions of the latest inventions, selected as containing pointed reference to the tastes and avocations of various members of the family. At the foot of the tree, a reconstruction of the sacred scene of Bethlehem must not be wanting, while on top, crowning its very summit, hovers the Christ Child—a radiant figure, replacing the snow and crimson of our Father Christmas. The children are taught that it is the Christ Child who sends them all their presents; towards Him their thoughts are turned throughout the season.

To the right and left of the tree, the Gift Tables are placed, one for each member of the family. Here in glorious ostentation (of which no man, however worldly, is ashamed) lie the gifts, spread out to their best advantage. Whether over or underwear, intended for outer or inner man, everything is exhibited to the admiring gaze of all comers during the week when the tree remains dressed and untouched.

It is lit at dusk on Christmas Eve—the longed-for moment when all its glories are at length revealed. In the homes blessed by the presence of little children, there is merriment, but everywhere there is a Christmas Tree. The family gathers round, embraces are exchanged, songs are sung. The whole evening is devoted to happiness. The fate of him is a tragic one who finds himself alone, far from dear kith and kin, a stranger in a strange town at such a time. In Germany, the streets are everywhere deserted, the restaurants empty, the theatres closed. Christmas Eve, the great home festival is in full swing. The Golden Milestone of his hearth claims every man.

HENRIETTA LESLIE.

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

Editor: SYLVIA PANKHURST.

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THE RUSSIAN PEACE

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

In every country the interests which are striving to benefit by the War are concentrating their forces to keep it going till it shall turn in their favour. Such forces in Germany appear to have caused a hitch in the peace negotiations between Russia and the Central Powers by refusing to agree to the removal of the meeting-place to Stockholm, but still more by attempts to secure for Germany the Baltic Provinces of Russia by manœuvring the Russian principle that the inhabitants of disputed territories shall decide their own destiny. The nobility in the Baltic Provinces are largely German. In the days of the Czardom, and notably during the years of 1905-6, the German nobility and the autocratic Russian Government supported each other against the people. Now that Russia has a Socialist Government the German nobility would probably prefer to place themselves under German rule. It now appears that in the course of the negotiations at Brest the German delegates have said, that when early in the War Russian Poland was invaded by the troops of the Central Powers, certain Polish groups declared their preference for the rule of the Central Powers to that of Russian Czardom, and Pilsudsky, a Polish leader, formed a company to fight with the Central Powers.

On the strength of such manifestations it would appear that during the course of the Brest peace negotiations the Germans expressed the view that at the close of hostilities it would be unnecessary to remove German troops from Poland and the Baltic Provinces because the inhabitants of these territories had already expressed their desire to remain under German rule.

The Russians at once replied that the decision as to the future destiny of Poland and the Baltic Provinces, as of other territories, must be made by referendum vote of the whole population concerned taken after the withdrawal of foreign troops.

The British papers would have us believe that as a result of the firm stand by Russia in support of principle, negotiations have been broken off, but in spite of headlines and leading articles to this effect, it has to be admitted that negotiations are still going on, and it is probable that Russia will win her way on this as on other points. Undoubtedly there is a strong popular Peace movement in Germany which causes great anxiety to the German capitalists, and the Russian Socialists report that 25,000 German soldiers have dug themselves into trenches and are prepared to defend themselves with the ammunition at their disposal against being sent by their German rulers to fight on any front. The Russians are continuing a vigorous Peace propaganda amongst the German soldiers.

But another consideration beside fear of the German populace draws certain sections of German capitalist opinion towards Peace with Russia—that is the hope of cementing an economic friendship with Russia which will enable German capital to exploit undeveloped Russia.

This desire animates the breasts of British capitalists also, and it is at the same time shameful and ludicrous to observe the anxiety and the cynical, unblushing frankness with which their sordid aims are discussed by certain capitalist organs, which declare that Britain must express her "sympathy" and "friendship" for Russia in the interests of British capital. Such newspapers gushingly fawned on the Bolsheviks, whom they have so fiercely reviled when it became known that the Bolsheviks had spurned the German claim to Poland and the Baltic Provinces.

EUROPEAN CAPITAL v. SOCIALIST RUSSIA

Whilst some capitalist sections would endeavour to cajole the Russian Socialists, others would coerce them. The attempt to secure the coercion of Russia by Japan appears to have failed. The "Manchester Guardian" of January 5th, giving Japanese newspapers as its authority, says that "all the Japanese publicists" condemn the suggestion of sending Japanese troops to Europe. The "Guardian" quotes Dr. Takuzo, who declares that "the greatest autocrat to-day is not the Kaiser, but Lloyd George, or perhaps Wilson, and Mr. Shintaro, who says: "If every inhuman Power must be chastised, Japan would have to declare war against the Allies, as well as the Central Powers." Can it be that the Japanese are going to set the Western nations an example in commonsense and humanity? But "The Times," January 7th, reports:

"The Chinese and French Commission is about to consider the question of Chinese troops proceeding to Europe."

This probably signifies another attempt to coerce the Russian democracy by means of an Eastern invasion, or by the threat of such an invasion! Meanwhile, the "Daily Chronicle," January 8th, publishes a rumour from Petrograd that secret negotiations have been going on between the Allies and the Central Powers, and that the Allies have proposed to the Central Powers "a Peace after which they would together take over the economical domination of Russia." The rumour appears not improbable if considered in conjunction with the secret treaties and understandings between the various Powers which we published last week.

PRESIDENT WILSON AND RUSSIA.

President Wilson's references to Russia in his speech to Congress on January 7th certainly lends colour to this suggestion. We give below his words, as they are quoted in "The Times":

The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and more than a welcome assistance of every kind that she may need and she herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their goodwill, and of their comprehension of her needs, as distinguished from their own interests and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

It is true that President Wilson promises Russia "institutions of her own choosing"; it is not his to make such promises to a free nation, and this is not the language which Britain, France, Italy, and America employ towards each other. This has a note of patronage and condescension which usually bodes ill when Great Powers employ it towards lesser Powers. But Russia is not a lesser Power, and the Russian Socialists are proving themselves a match for all the diplomats of the world. If the Allied democracies will but support them they will certainly secure the just peace terms for which they are contending, and will maintain the Russian Revolution in spite of the attacks of the capitalists without and within. Even should the Allied democracies fail to support them, we still hope that the Russian Socialists will win through.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH.

Mr. Lloyd George's speech to the Labour Conference is said to be an improvement on his previous bellicose utterances. It may be a trifle less bombastic in form, but in essentials we regret to record no real improvement. It should be read in the light of his own comment on Count Czernin's reply to the Russian proposals given at Brest on December 25th. Mr. Lloyd George says:—

We are told that "it is not the intention" of the Central Powers "to appropriate forcibly" any occupied territories or "to rob of its independence" any nation which has lost its "political independence" during the War. It is obvious that almost any scheme of conquest and annexation could be perpetrated within the literal interpretation of such a pledge.

It would appear to us that the words quoted are perfectly plain and rule out all possibility of conquest or annexation to honest minds. But we cannot stand surety for Count Czernin any more than for Mr. Lloyd George. They probably understand each other's methods, and Mr. Lloyd George's key to Count Czernin's meaning is a useful key to his own when he says:

"The destruction or disruption of Germany or the German people has never been a War aim with us . . . nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital or . . . the lands of Asia Minor and Thrace—which are predominantly Turkish in race."

An ominous phrase of Mr. Lloyd George is:—

"Apart from this, whatever settlement is made will be suitable only to the circumstances under which it is made, and as those circumstances change, changes in the settlement will be called for."

This, good innocent people, means, in diplomacy, "Grab what you can!" It proves that in Mr. Lloyd George's mind the peace conditions are by no means based on immutable principles.

The settlement which Mr. Lloyd George considers the position at present calls for includes the following points:—

DENIAL OF "NO INDEMNITIES."

Evacuation of territories invaded by the Central Powers and the payment by them of indemnities, (disguised under the title "reparation") to Belgium, France, Serbia, Montenegro. The Russian formula "no indemnities" is thus denied. Also "reparation" (*i.e.*, indemnities) for injuries done in violation of international law. Will Mr. Lloyd George apply that to all sides?

DENIAL OF THE PRINCIPLE OF "NO ANNEXATIONS."

German Colonies to be retained for the disposal of the Peace Conference.

Dardanelles to be taken from Turkey and internationalised (why not internationalise other Straits?).

Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Palestine to be taken from Turkey.

Alsace-Lorraine to be taken from Germany.

Territory to be given to Italy.

Territory to be given to Roumania.

RIGHT OF THE PEOPLES TO DECIDE THEIR OWN DESTINY TO BE PARTIALLY AND FORCIBLY APPLIED.

Mr. Lloyd George insists that the disposal of the German colonies in Africa shall depend on the wishes of the natives. He says, "the general principle of national self-determination is as applicable in their cases as in those of occupied European territories."

We gladly note the admission. Will he apply the principle to all African colonies? Will he agree to the Russian stipulation that foreign occupation shall be withdrawn while the vote is taken? If so, we are confident that Africa will return to the rule of the African and that European domination will disappear.

The nationality of Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine, when they are taken from the Turks is to be recognised, but "the exact form of that recognition "need not here be discussed," says Mr. Lloyd George. We fancy the nationalities in question will feel the desirability of obtaining guarantees.

Poland is to be free. "Genuine self-government" is to be granted to nationalities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As Trotsky aptly inquires: Is this to apply to Ireland, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Indo-China? The Russians have proved their faith by granting the opportunity of freedom to Finland, Ukrania, White Russia, and other districts. Will the British Government prove equally disinterested?

Mr. Lloyd George assumes the defeat of the Bolsheviks in their negotiations with the Central Powers and declares that the invaded portions of Russia "will henceforth be ruled by the Prussian sword in the interests of Prussian autocracy, and that the whole of Russia will be "partly enticed" "partly bullied" into "complete economic and ultimate political enslavement to Germany."

If Mr. Lloyd George really believes that, instead of shedding crocodile tears over the freedom of Poland, Lithuania and Courland, he should bestir himself to secure the sending of Allied peace negotiators to Brest-Litovsk to back up the Russian effort to secure a People's Peace. His statement that Britain's aid has not been invoked is false, since all the Allies were invited to join the negotiations. Trotsky asserts that the Allied capitalists desire Germany to secure an advantageous peace with Russia, in order that she will agree to surrender what the Allies want in the West. Be that as it may, we have reason to trust neither Mr. Lloyd George nor his Government. Our sense of security is not enhanced by the knowledge that he has consulted Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey, and that Lord Northcliffe (occupying Crewe House as the head of the American Mission, which seems to have become a permanent institution) is virtually a member of the Cabinet.

The only way to a people's peace is to support the efforts of the Russian Socialist Government and to put no trust in capitalist politicians.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

FOOD AND PEACE
OUR DEMANDS.

(1) *The complete socialisation of the food supply, with the entire elimination of private profit in food, whether imported or home produced.*

(2) *Production on a large scale, manufacture and preparation of food and distribution to be managed by Workers' Committees appointed by the Trade Union Congress and the local Trades Councils; half these committees to be composed of women.*

(3) *Equal rationing whilst the food scarcity continues, to be organised by the Workers' Committees on a practical and scientific basis, so that, for instance, the butter ration shall include all substitutes, and the bread ration shall cover and include all breadstuffs, biscuits, buns, etc.*

(4) *Food to be supplied free, and paid for by a per capita levy in the rates, in order that the poor may not suffer more than the well-to-do.*

RATIONING BY ORDER OF U.S.A.

Food rationing is coming: The Food Control department has long threatened us with it, and newspaper leaders, more in sorrow than in anger, have warned the public that the measure of its dietetic self-sacrifice is not yet great enough to stave off compulsory rations. But all this is merely to prepare our minds, for the matter is decided. During the Inter-Allied Conference in Paris the American Government exacted a pledge from the Governments of Britain, France, and Italy to put into effect what the "Washington Statement" Press summary describes as "the legalised compulsory control of foodstuffs in their respective countries." This undoubtedly means the compulsory rationing of the people, whose food supplies are to be systematically reduced in order to save shipping for the carriage to Europe of American soldiers and military equipment.

ONLY the WORKERS can be TRUSTED

The management of the food supply must be put into the hands of organised labour; the Trade Union Congress and local Trades Councils may lack the tremendous courage, imagination, and experience that is desirable for the gigantic task, but no other large organisation exists which possesses a greater measure of those qualities. Moreover, none but the workers can be trusted to deal with any approach to fairness in this matter. Lord Rhondda and Mr. Clynes have repeatedly warned us all that compulsory rationing will bear most hardly upon the poor—and so it will if it is organised by a Government which represents the upper and middle classes, because th well-to-do are practically unable to divest themselves of the wicked, but to them comfortable, prejudice that working people need less of food, warmth, and comfort than leisured and professional people, and that those whose physique has been impaired by pre-natal hardship and want in early childhood are able to maintain their working efficiency in later life on a lower basis of comfort than that required by those on whom every care has been lavished. "For he that hath to him shall be given, and he that hath not from him shall be taken away, even that which he hath" is the doctrine planted deep in the heart of the average man and woman who is well-to-do. The mass of the people are workers; the fate of the masses must not be left in the hands of the well-to-do!

Under present conditions, chaos and exploitation grow apace. The Government cynically allows the farmers, shippers, traders, and manufacturers to exploit the people. As they held up potatoes to secure higher prices, the farmers are now holding up meat supplies because the compulsory prices are not high enough to suit them. Mr. T. F. Boys, Director of Meat Supplies, told the "Manchester Guardian" that:—

"The farmers are not deliberately holding back their fat cattle because of their dissatisfaction with the new regulations," but it is thought that they are showing their characteristic caution until they see how the new prices and regulations will affect the trade."

A distinction without a difference this! But it is the duty of the Food Control Department to commandeer stocks which are deliberately held up to secure enhanced prices; and this the Food Control Department does not desire to do, for many influential persons are concerned. Presently, therefore, we shall see the profiteers win again, and the Control Department will offer them a higher price. But what else can be expected? Lord Rhondda brutally puts the position:—

"You have only to tighten your belt. . . . . .

"Don't think that when compulsory rationing has come the queues are going to be done away with.

"Don't think there is going to be an absolutely fair distribution. . . . .

"In Germany there are queues and in Germany there is a tremendous outcry against the fact that, notwithstanding a rationing system and tickets, the rich are getting a good deal more than their share, with the result that the poor are not getting what they ought to receive. . . . .

"We are engaged at the present time in completing a scheme for compulsory rationing. It will have to be submitted to the Cabinet and when the Cabinet has sanctioned it we shall put that scheme into operation as quickly as we can."

That is, plain enough, rationing which will be unfair; rationing, harsh to the poor, tender to the rich, is to be introduced; the Cabinet will force it upon the people without asking their consent. The people will groan in their misery—but let them not groan against equal distribution, but against those who enforce unequal distribution! Let the workers insist on managing the business themselves. Let them not shrink from the story that experts are needed for the affair; let them observe that under this business Government the military authorities (according to the "Times," January 7th) allege that "Government departments, more or less closely connected with the food problem," represented to the Army authorities that there was a big surplus of cattle in the United Kingdom, and urged them to buy 200,000 beasts. The military authorities could only buy 70,000 beasts, because the Food Controller fixed prices for the Army and private buyers, so that the private buyer could outbid the Army. Nevertheless, the Food Department now cites the Army purchase of 70,000 beasts as one of the causes of the meat shortage! At a Liverpool meeting of dealers in feeding stuffs reported in the "Manchester Guardian," Mr. Piggot, a Liverpool dealer, complained that American and Egyptian cattle foods cannot be imported because the controlled selling price in this country is lower than the price at which American and Egyptian exporters are willing to sell. An American firm wrote:—

"It is absolutely useless to waste money on cables till your Government raises the maximum price."

Inter-Allied Conferences decide to ration the people, but they fail to fix inter-Allied prices to prevent the machinations of the profiteer. The Ministry of Food has invited the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, the Workers' War Emergency Committee, and the Co-operative movement to assist him by forming a Consumers' Council, but the workers should not be content to exercise merely advisory functions and to facilitate the coming of food rationing on the old profiteering basis. They should demand the complete control of the food supply, which they should manage on a Socialist basis. Special conferences should be called to elect representatives of organised Labour to undertake this important work.

Those who accept the view that the workers should manage the food supply should see that resolutions embodying the demands set forth above are discussed with all the working-class organisations with which they can get in touch.

This is the people's way to deal with the food supply. Men and women, insist on these things being done; do not be parties to the slow starvation of your children which the Government recklessly contemplates in order to win the War!

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

There is a tragic humour in the spectacle of the old men of the Society of Antiquaries, and the rest, who are raising their voices against the rough removal by furniture men and the cramming away in cellars of the priceless historical and natural history collections of the British Museum to make way for the Air Board. These old men appeal to the honour and dignity of the nation in their pleading for the preservation of the record of ages of human evolutionary effort and for the saving of the result of many years spent in careful classification. They submit that the very cause of civilisation is at stake. Did these old men plead for the saving of the nation's youth; have they thought of the set back which the War is causing to the long upward effort of the race in character building? Alas, no, for the most part, they are only jealous for their inanimate specimens. But they have made a protest which ought to have been made by the parents of the nation on behalf of their sons. It is in keeping with the unbridled commercialism which dominates the Government and enforces the continuance of the War that the antiquarians should be beaten by the Air Board. What concern have the Rothermeres and Northcliffs for records that are older than their titles? How can it be good that the public should be able to delve in the British Museum and discover there the history of international relations or even to read the back numbers of that capitalist weathercock, "The Times"?

FRANCHISE IN HUNGARY

"In Hungary the Esterhazy bill for a reform of the Hungarian franchise is being brought forward by the new Wekerle Ministry. This bill reduces the voting age from 30 to 24, and all men over 24 years of age of Hungarian nationality who can read and write, and who pay at least 10 kronen (one krone equals 10d.) taxes, receive a vote. Further, all men in possession of the medal for bravery or the Karl Cross, all those who have served two years in the army, and all who have attained non-commissioned rank, whatever their ages, receive a vote, as does also any man who is carrying on a trade or business of his own. According to these new provisions, 3,595,000 men will receive votes, 443,000 of whom are under 24 years of age.

"The voting age for women is also fixed at 24. The main qualification for a woman is that she has passed the fourth standard in a secondary school, but all the wives of men who have been killed at the front or discharged through sickness or wounds since the beginning of the war (provided there is issue of the marriage) also receive a vote. Further, all women who have been for two years active members of a scientific, literary, or artistic society are entitled to a vote. Secret voting, which obtained previously in only 66 constituencies, is to be extended to all municipal constituencies,, and both railways and waterways are to be placed at the disposal of voters during elections."—"Manchester Guardian."

Give this Paper to a Friend—To-day

A MESSAGE from MAXIM LITVINOFF
AMBASSADOR TO GREAT BRITAIN FROM THE RUSSIAN PEOPLES GOVERNMENT.

To the Workers of Great Britain.

Comrades,—The Russian People's and Peasants' Government has done me the honour of choosing me as its representative in this country and has entrusted me, in this critical moment of history with the task of interpreting the desires and aspirations of Russian Revolutionary Democracy, and of keeping it informed of those of British Democracy.

To this end I consider it my first duty to put before you the real truth about the Revolution, particularly in its bearing upon the War.

Millions of men have been calmly doomed to death, whole countries to devastation, generations of workers, all the world over, to privation, and at last, one may hope, the masses are going to profit by their bitter lessons. Bled to death, bereft of millions of its sons, brought to the very verge of starvation and utter misery, but enlightened by years of Socialist propaganda and inured to revolution by former struggles, the proletariat of Russia suddenly arose and with one stroke freed itself of its bonds, and with the battle-cries: Peace! Bread! Land! Liberty! overthrew its rulers and oppressors. Here I should like to point out that the motto of the February revolution was Peace! and not Continuance of the War! as some people in this country would like you to think. It was, of course, the secret desire of the middle-class parties, involved in the revolution, but doing their best to distort its character, to continue the War. But it was not their revolution, it was the revolution of the working man and the peasant, in mufti and in uniform. For ten months the working-men have been the guardians of the revolution, by the wide-spread network of their Soviets (Councils of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates) holding the real power in their hands, permeating the revolution with the social ideas of their class. Unfortunately, at first, some of their leaders were so ill-advised as to share the power with these middle-class politicians, who did everything they could to obstruct and arrest the further development of the revolution, to prevent the masses from realising their political and social aims and to force them to remain still involved in the War. Ostensibly standing for peace, these politicians actually thwarted the peace movement by proceeding with the arrangements of secret diplomacy. They appealed to the proletariat of the Central Powers, but the obvious duplicity of their policy weakened their appeals, which met with little response, while at home their irresolute and wavering handling of the land question and other problems of the revolution caused disaffection and disillusion among the masses and fed the counter-revolution and reaction. Alive to the dangers of the prolongation of the War and of counter-revolution, the workmen and soldiers of Petrograd, Moscow, and other towns, found themselves compelled to break finally with the middle-classes and to restore full power to the Soviets. And so the second revolution, the true proletarian revolution of November, was brought about and a mighty class-war began in Russia, which is now going on. This second outbreak showed the capitalists and their lower-middle-class helpers a vision of its far-reaching possibilities and now it is that they would move heaven and earth, if they could, to crush the victorious Russian proletariat. No means are too low for them to employ. They shrink from nothing, not even from the complete disorganisation of the economic life of the country, not caring how much they add to the troubles already heaped on the people by four years of war.

In the teeth of this bitter struggle the working-men of Russia are creating new forms of State organisation, carrying on social reconstruction on a tremendous and lofty scale, providing homes for the homeless, introducing an 8-hour working-day, giving land to the peasant, taking control over industry, nationalising the banks and insurance companies, rebuilding the social structure in every direction. To reveal to the world the Imperialistic nature of this war, the Secret Treaties have been published and decisive steps have been taken to bring about a general, just, democratic peace. The Soviets are forcing the Governments of all the belligerent countries to state clearly their war-aims, thus opening the way for peace negotiations. By giving complete freedom to all the small nationalities of the Russian Empire they prove the unselfishness and sincerity of their treatment of the national or no-annexation question Their revolutionary propaganda among the German soldiers on the Western front and among prisoners of war is undermining the strength of German autocracy and militarism more effectively than military victories could and has already provoked a strong Peace movement in Germany and Austria. But these endeavours meet with opposition not only from capitalists in Russia, but from capitalists all the world over. The Russian Revolution, with its dash and vigour, has become the focus of the hatred of International capitalism, and now the prolongation of the war, in addition to its former Imperialistic aims, has another aim—to crush the Soviets and the revolution. And so the Russian workers are not only fighting their own battles, they are fighting your battles too, and they will succumb, unless the workers in other countries come speedily to their help.

Realise this! The further prolongation of the war must lead to the defeat of the Russian Revolution and to the triumph of militarism and reaction everywhere. An immediate, just, democratic peace on the principle of "No annexation, no indemnities," and the right of self-definition to all nationalities will spell the downfall of militarism in all countries. This peace can be achieved, if only Labour will speak in full voice and act with all its might. Workers of Britain—Peace is in the balance! The Russian workers appeal to you to join them in their efforts to turn the scale. Labour—speak!

OUR CONGRATULATIONS

To Mr. Galsworthy on having refused a knighthood. We say with Burns:—

"For a' that, and a' that,
His riband star, and a' that,
The man, of independent mind,
He looks, and laughs at a' that."

To Mr. Tchitcherine on his return to Russia.

To the "Star" on having protested against the British Government's refusal to recognise the Russian Socialist Government.

To the Gorton employees of the Great Central Railway Company for their refusal to return to work till their Dukinfield comrades should share their wages increase.

To Mrs. Wheeldon, on having won her freedom from unjust imprisonment on a false charge. We are pleased to learn that she has returned home to Derby and that her health is improving. We hope that her son and daughter-in-law may soon be released also.

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W. WOODS & SONS,
Family Bakers.

WHATS' ON?
W.S.F. FIXTURES

INDOOR.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12th.

Bow Women's Hall, 7.30 p.m., Joint Social (Bow and Poplar).

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16th.

Bow Women's Hall, 8 p.m., Speakers' Class. Instructor: Mr. L. Hogben.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18th.

Capmakers' Hall, 51 Grove Street, Commercial Road, 8.30 p.m., Mrs. Bouvier, "The Message of the Russian Revolution to the Democracies of the World."

Bow Women's Hall, 8 p.m., General Meeting (London Section), Monday, January 21st

OUTDOOR.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12th.

Great Push for Peace, Socialism and Votes for All in Stratford. Meet at 2.30 p.m. at 73 Calderon Road, Leytonstone; meeting at 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Bouvier, Mrs. Walker, and Mr. L. Hogben.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13th.

Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.45 a.m., Miss Price.

Club Row, Bethnal Green, 11.45 a.m.

Flagstaff, Hampstead, 3 p.m., Mrs. Walker.

Finsbury Park, 3 p.m., Mrs. Bouvier.

Hdye Park, Marble Arch, 3.30 p.m, Miss P. Rickards, Mrs. Birch.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19th.

Great Push for Peace, Socialism, and Votes for All in Walthamstow. Speakers: Mrs. Bouvier, Miss Price, Mrs. Walker, and Mr. L. Hogben. Full particulars next week.

FEDERATION NOTES

NEW MID-RHONDDA BRANCH.

When Miss Pankhurst recently visited Rhondda it was decided to form a branch of the Federation there. Two branch meetings have since been held at which Miss Given Fay, 40 Blanche Terrace, Williamstown, Glam., was elected Secretary, Mrs. Mainwaring Chairman, and Mrs. Morgans Treasurer. The branch has decided to hold a public meeting as soon as possible. The following resolutions were passed:—

1.—"In view of the scarcity and high price of milk the Mid-Rhondda Branch of the W.S.F. urges the Rhondda Urban District Council to provide immediately depôts where nursing and expectant mothers can obtain a plentiful and pure supply of milk at a low price for themselves and their children."

2.—"This meeting of the Mid-Rhondda Branch of the W.S.F. draws the attention of the Rhondda Food Controller to the grave danger arising from the continued presence of food queues in the locality and the serious discontent existing among citizens at the unsatisfactory and unequal distribution of such supplies as come into the Rhondda and urges that the Food Controller take over the supplies of those scarce commodities such as butter, margarine, bacon, lard, cheese, condensed milk, and tea and distribute them among all traders according to the number of persons registered for sugar."

The Mid-Rhondda Branch Secretary informs us that the Rhondda Food Control Committee has moved in the direction of the second resolution and to expedite putting its scheme into operation the Rhondda Education Committee is giving a week's holiday to the school children so that the teacher's services can be requisitioned by the Food Control Committee to carry out the work of registering the citizens for butter, tea and cheese.

This branch is arranging regular meetings. At the next one Nurse Davies will be the speaker.

SPEAKERS' CLASS.

The Speakers' Class is restarting on Wednesday at 8 p.m. Mr. L. Hogben is again taking charge. All members and friends are invited. Fee, 3d. per class. For further particulars apply to Miss P. Lynch, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

BOW AND BROMLEY JOINT SOCIAL.

Members who have taken tickets for the above to-day (Saturday) are asked to return all money and unsold tickets as soon as possible to Miss P. Lynch, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

POPLAR SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOL, 20 RAILWAY ST. POPLAR. NEW YEAR'S PARTY.

On the last Saturday evening of the outgoing year 1917, pedestrians passing a curious-looking beer-house in Railway Street, a dismal turning just off the chief market place of Poplar, must have been attracted by the voices of children singing lustily the "Marseillaise" and the "Red Flag." Any sympathiser with the peoples emancipation, who had chanced to pass would have gained new hopes for the coming year, and had he peeped in, he would have seen a most inspiring scene. The singers of the songs were the children of the Poplar Socialist Sunday School celebrating the coming New Year with the hope that it would be the year of Peace and better conditions. A very pleasant party was in progress. After the children had finished a glorious tea, supervised by Mrs. Fleming, of the Poplar B.S.P., assisted by extremely willing helpers, we all passed into the concert room. This in the old days must have been commonly known as the jug and bottle department. Here Miss Lagsding played a cycle of popular songs, which were greatly appreciated and sung heartily by the children. Then followed some jolly games, in which the adults took part, all of them looking as happy as the children. After this, Miss Smyth addressed the children and adults, explaining the importance of educating the young in Socialistic principles and also pointing out clearly the value of an early training in co-operation. This point was further emphasised by the superintendent who explained that this spirit was already so well developed in the school that the children had amongst themselves without any adult help, arranged a fairy play for the party. And this was much admired when played later in the evening. Miss Horsfall, Mrs. Wood, and Miss Nellie Searle, one of the scholars, then won the admiration of the children by their charming and appropriate songs. Miss Isaacs, with winning smiles, presided over a toy dip. This was good fun for all. Some useful games and books were then raffled for by the elder scholars. The children were at all times the heart and soul of a very pleasant evening, the older scholars were on the Committee for organising the party, and the very useful help they willingly gave in every possible way showed again the value of democratic co-operation in schools. Mr. Russell, Mr. Fleming, and many others kindly assisted in various useful and cheerful ways. Miss Stiff lent a gramophone.

A. A. W.

OUR FUNDS

Donations to be sent to the Hon. Financial Secretary, Miss N. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3.
All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED (TWO WEEKS).

GENERAL FUND.—Mr. Rowett, £5; Irene, per Mrs. Drake (20s. weekly), £5; W. J. Woods, Esq. (monthly), £2; Miss Rae, £1; Miss E. Lowy, £1; Mrs. M. L. Bodley, £1; Miss E. Billing (half-yearly), 6s.; Miss L. Cutten (monthly), 5s.; Mr. J. Woods, 5s.; Mrs. A. Clarke, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Eglinton, 2s. 6d.; Poplar Socialist Sunday School, 2s. 6d.; Miss Le Pla, 2s. COLLECTION: Bow Women's Hall, 6s. 10d.

PEACE CAMPAIGN.—Miss Mary Tighe, 10s.; Miss M. Gonne (card), 10s.; Miss L. Isaacs (5s. weekly), 10s.; Mr. S. A. Gough, 5s.

"DREADNOUGHT" FUND.—Arnold Lupton, Esq., £20; Wm. A. Albright, Esq., £10; H. Dennis Bradley, Esq., £5; Miss Joan Beauchamp, £5; Harrison Barrow, Esq., £5; Mr. J. Polishuk (card), £1; Mrs. Garnett (card), £1; F. C. Conybeare, Esq., £1; Mrs. A. M. Burke (card), £1; Mr. J. Hart (card), 10s.; Mrs. Hercbergova, 5s.; Mrs. Richmond (2s. fortnightly), 4s.; Miss M. L. Brett, 3s. 6d.; Mr. W. Carter, 3s. 6d.; Mr. Rodgers, 3s.; Miss Gladys J. Titford, 3s.; Miss Cousins (card), 3s.; Mr. J. R. Jones, 2s. 6d.; Miss Spong, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Singleton, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Brimley, 2s. 6d.; Miss M. Schaub, 2s. 6d.; Robson Paige, Esq., 1s. 6d.; Mr. G. B. A. Douglas, 1s. 3d.; Miss Helen Lindsay, 1s. 3d.; Miss Kathleen Lee, 1s. 3d.; Mr. Beamish (card), 1s.; Pte. J. W. Marchant, 1s.

"DREADNOUGHT" GUARANTEE FUND.—Previously acknowledged (weekly), £2 15s. 7d.

MILK AND GENERAL DISTRESS.—Messrs. J. Gliksten and Sons, £10 10s.; Miss K. Woodward, £5; Misses Gulland, £3 3s.; Mrs. Waring Smyth, £3; Central Foundation School, £2; Miss M. Hodge, £2; per Miss Udny (monthly), £1 2s. 5d.; M iss Case, £1 1s.; Miss Nellie Young, £1; Miss Harriet C. Newcomb, £1; Miss M. Mc Carthy, £1; Anon, £1; Mr. and Mrs. Tresaden, £1; Miss Weir, £1; Contessa Tomasi Isolani (monthly), £1; Miss Grainger Kerr, 10s. 9d.; Nurse Hebbes (10s. weekly), £1; Miss Gamman, 10s.; A. E. Burberry, Esq., 10s.; Wm. Holmes, Esq., 10s.; Misses Grant, 10s.; Mrs. Richmond (fortnightly), 10s.; Mrs. Guest, 8s.; Miss Thomas, 7s.; Miss Clutterbuck, 5s.; Mr. J. Woods, 5s.; Mrs. Gillies, 4s.; Miss Crabb (monthly), 3s. 6d.; Winifred Martin, 3d. COLLECTIONS: L.S.A. Tool-room, £2 4s. 5d.; Misses E. and K. Lagsding, T. Watts, and Mrs. Bertram (Green's Yard and Cubitt Town), £1 9s. 6½d.; Miss H. Lazarnick, 19s.; The Experimental Shop, per Mr. F. Jarman, 16s.; Misses Vine and Gilbertson, 8s. 9½d.; Mr. Lazarnick, 6s. 2¾d.; Mothers' Arms Collecting Box, 3s. 5½d.; Mrs. Pascoe, 3s. 1½d.; Miss M. Schaub, 3s.; Miss Molly Newman, 2s.

OLD COCKNEY FAIR.—Mr. Edgar Lansbury, £5; Mr. Coleman, £5; Mrs. Julia Scurr, £2; Miss E. Gulland, 10s.; Miss Janet Mardon, 5s.; Mrs. J. E. Smith, 2s.

CLOTHES, etc.—Anon, Miss M. Gliksten, Mrs. Trevelyan, Anon, Miss E. E. White, Miss Dorothy Henkel, Miss McCombie, Anon, Mrs. W. J. Brown.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

FAMILY LIMITATION DOCTRINE. Post free, 1½d. —Malthusian League, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster.

SUFFRAGE WORKERS should spend their holidays at "Sea View," Victoria Road, Brighton. Hostess, Miss Turner.

TYPEWRITING REQUIRED at home; MSS. and Plays; Duplicating accurately done. Terms on application.—Apply Miss A. O. Beamish, 85 Hoxton Street.

WORKING HOUSEKEEPER (live in) REQUIRED by Lady; ten-roomed house near Baker Street Station; no meals required to be prepared beyond breakfast; salary by arrangement; accommodation could be provided for friend; suitable for mother and daughter, two sisters.—Apply Box 400.

PRODUCE FROM A CO-OPERATIVE GARDEN.—To assist in working this you are invited to buy fruit and vegetables now to be supplied in season at market rates.—Apply Box 100.

INTERNATIONAL YOUNG AGE PENSIONS.

Dezirante al vi feličan novjaro kaj 5s. po semajno por ĉiu infano, de la ŝtato, por ke infaneco kaj maljuneco estu plena de ĝojo, en la feličaj estonaj novjaroj.

INTERNATIONAL YOUNG AGE PENSIONS.

Dear Friends of Humanity,—Before the storm bursts let us endeavour to place the children and all those who are helpless in comparative safety by securing SEVEN SHILLINGS A WEEK each for them from the State, that we may be free to work for other reforms. At present, whilst they are exposed to cold, poverty and bunger, we can think of nothing else. 7s. a week would ENABLE FAMILIES TO MOVE AT ONCE INTO BETTER HOUSES, and to obtain better milk and food. This would stimulate local trade and reduce expenses of WORKHOUSES, HOSPITALS, PRISONS and LUNATIC ASYLUMS, and do away with all poor rates to such an extent as to be A GREAT SAVING to the taxpayers, and would enable sensible girls to marry where they would otherwise not dare to do so, and to bring up healthy happy children to become stalwart citizens and parents in their turn, besides relieving untold pain and suffering, and being an estimable benefit to the State.

The fact of a married man becoming automatically POORER at the birth of each child constitutes a cruel wrong to all children, and until each child has 7s. a week in its own individual right, as an infant citizen, suffering, war, disease, and poverty can never be abolished. Let us all demand this from the Government now before it may be too late.—

S. MACKENZIE KENNEDY.

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THE WAY TO PEACE
SHEFFIELD WORKERS DECLARE SOLIDARITY WITH RUSSIAN COMRADES.

"The Sheffield strikers met yesterday, under the direction of the Workers' Union. Mr. Arthur Bell presided. The Chairman declared that they had no quarrel with the workers of Germany or any in the known world, but it was up to them to set themselves to give the Government departments and the War Cabinet marching orders. . . . A resolution protested against a further comb-out being applied until the Government gives a guarantee of its intention not to continue the War longer than necessary to secure the policy laid down by their brother democrats in Russia."—"Manchester Guardian."

That resolution of the Sheffield strikers is the most hopeful happening in the British Labour world that has taken place for many a long day. That is the answer which should be given by the workers in every trade to the Government's request for a further comb-out.

CONCESSIONS TO C.O.s

We are not surprised to learn that many Conscientious Objectors have refused the concessions which Lord Curzon announced on December 4th, as some of these concessions are worthless and some impossible to poor men.

(1) Allows a prisoner to wear his own clothing. [Men dependant on their own exertions for a living cannot provide themselves with clothing when their power to earn is stopped.]

(2) A prisoner may have his cell cleaned for him at the rate of 3s. 6d. a week. [Again a costly and withal a snobbish proposition!]

(3) Two exercises a day with permission to converse during exercise time. [Those who have been long in prison will derive less pleasure and benefit from this than newcomers; poor feeding and confinement make men and women after a time too tired to desire exercise and their vitality will in many cases be too low to enable them to keep warm in the winter.]

(4) One visit of a quarter of an hour per month instead of half an hour. [It is said that in some prisons the men have protested and secured half-hour visits as before.]

(5) One short letter a fortnight instead of one long letter a month. [A petty half measure! Why not two long letters a month?]

(6) A prisoner may have his own books sent to the prison library and may be allowed two of these a month in his cell. He can bring these books out of prison on his discharge.

Seven C.O.s. have now been released "as being in a poor state of health," in accordance with Lord Curzon's promise of December 4th. Four of these men are completely discharged, three transferred to Army Reserve W.

TORTURE IN THE ARMY

Torture in the Army is by no means confined to C.O.s. On December 28th, Private C. F. Davey, aged 51, cut his throat at Chelsea Barracks because he could not endure the punishment heaped upon him for being ill. The post-mortem showed that he had disease of the heart muscle, fatty degeneration and atrophy, chronic bronchitis and early cirrhosis of the liver. He had complained of a touch of diarrhœa, was called a malingerer, and was given two days C.B., and made to march carrying a weight of 20 lbs. for two hours, with a halt of ten minutes per hour. The King's Regulations prescribe an interval of three-quarters of an hour, but the Drill Sergeant said it was not customary to allow it. The Regulations are brutal; their administration is still more brutal. When men have learnt solidarity such brutalities will cease.

CRITICISM, AND A REPLY

Dear Editor,—I hope you will excuse my saying that when in your Christmas number you find fault with Mr. J. H. Thomas for saying that to repudiate the War Loan would be wicked, I am afraid I am unable to agree with you. People of all classes, not excluding poor people, have been urged to put their savings into War Savings Certificates and children attending schools have been also encouraged to save up their pence, and buy War Savings Certificates. To say in a few years' time that they could not have their interest and capital, which they were promised, would, in my opinion, be very cruel and a breach of faith.—Yours, etc., E. J. MOLLETT.

[Our reply is that under Socialism people will neither need nor be allowed to live on interest on money invested. To live on interest is to live without working for a living on the labour of others. The people who could not afford to buy War Loan will have to help pay the interest on the superfluous money that more fortunate people were able to invest. Our correspondent speaks of the poor people and children who have put small sums in War Loan, it appears to us that the pennies of the poor are being used as a bulwark to protect the pounds of the rich! Trade Union funds also have been invested in War Loan. Will that secure Trade Union support for the capitalist system?—Editor, the "Workers' Dreadnought."]

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